

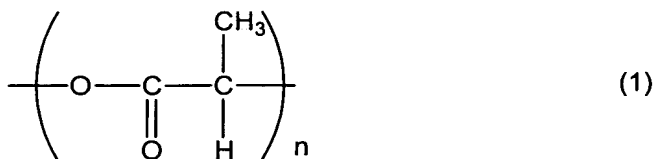
AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings of claims in the application:

1. (Currently Amended) A polylactic acid composite material, comprising:
a polylactic acid;
a low molecular weight compound which has an amide group; and
a layered clay mineral that has been organically modified ~~by means of~~ using
an organic onium salt.
2. (Canceled)
3. (Currently Amended) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein the low molecular weight compound is ~~a hydroxyamide and/or bis-amide~~ a member selected from the group consisting of hydroxyamide, bis-amide and mixtures thereof.
4. (Original) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein the organic onium salt has hydroxy groups.
5. (Original) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, further comprising talc.
6. (Original) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, further comprising whiskers and/or an EPDM rubber.

7. (Currently Amended) A molded ~~body~~ article which is obtained by molding the polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1.

8. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said polylactic acid is a polymer having repeating units expressed by the following general formula (1):



wherein n indicates an integer.

9. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said polylactic acid is poly- D-lactic acid, poly-L-lactic acid, poly-DL-lactic acid or mixtures thereof.

10. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said polylactic acid is a copolymer.

11. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said polylactic acid is blended with a homopolymer of another polymerizable monomer.

12. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said low molecular weight compound having an amide group is selected from the group consisting of lauric acid amide, palmitic acid amide, oleic acid amide, stearic acid amide, erucic acid amide, behenic acid amide, ricinolic acid amide, hydroxystearic acid amide, lactic acid

amide, N-oleylpalmitic acid amide, N-oleyloleic acid amide, N-oleylstearic acid amide, N-stearyloleic acid amide, N-stearylstearic acid amide, N-stearylerucic acid amide, methylolstearic acid amide, methylolbehenic acid amide, methylene-bis-stearic acid amide, ethylene-bis-lauric acid amide, ethylene-bis-capric acid amide, ethylene-bis-oleic acid amide, ethylene-bis-stearic acid amide, ethylene-bis-erucic acid amide, ethylene-bis-behenic acid amide, ethylene-bis-isostearic acid amide, methylene-bis-12-hydroxystearic acid amide, hexamethylene-bis-12-hydroxystearic acid amide, ethylene-bis-12-hydroxystearic acid amide, butylene-bis-stearic acid amide, hexamethylene-bis-hydroxystearic acid amide, hexamethylene-bis-behenic acid amide, m-xylylene-bis-12-hydroxystearic acid amide, N,N'-dioleylsebacic acid amide, N,N'-dioleyladipic acid amide, N,N'-distearyl adipic acid amide, N,N'-distearyl sebacic acid amide, N,N'-distearyl isophthalic acid amide, N,N'-distearyl terephthalic acid amide, stearic acid monoethanolamide, stearic acid diethanolamide, oleic acid monoethanolamide, oleic acid diethanolamide, N-butyl-N'-stearylurea, N-propyl-N'-stearylurea, N-stearyl-N'-stearylurea, N-phenyl-N'-stearylurea, xylene-bis-stearylurea, toluylene-bis-stearylurea, hexamethylene-bis-stearylurea, diphenylmethane-bis-stearylurea, diphenylmethane-bis-laurylurea and mixtures thereof.

13. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said low molecular weight compound has a melting point of 20 to 230°C.

14. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said low molecular weight compound is a monomeric compound.

15. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, comprising 0.01 to 20 parts by weight of said low molecular weight compound, based on 100 parts by weight of said polylactic acid.

16. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said layered clay mineral is a smectite mineral, a kaolinite mineral, a vermiculite mineral, a mica mineral or mixtures thereof.

17. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said layered clay mineral has a cation exchange capacity of 30 to 300 meq/100 g.

18. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein an inter-layer distance of the layered clay mineral that is organically modified using an organic onium salt is 2.9 nm or greater based on the mean distance between the centers of gravity of the respective layers.

19. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, comprising 0.01 to 20 parts by weight of the organically modified layered clay mineral, based on 100 parts by weight of said polylactic acid.

20. (New) The polylactic acid composite material according to claim 1, wherein said low molecular weight compound having an amide group is selected from the group consisting of polyoxyethylenestearic acid amides, polyoxyethyleneoleic acid amides, and mixtures thereof.